

Gender Empowerment in Barnoti and Kathua Blocks in Kathua District

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Abstract: *This paper attempted to study gender empowerment in Barnoti and Kathua blocks in Kathua district of Jammu and Kashmir. It dealt with different factors influencing gender empowerment in rural areas. Aspects like number of the sampled households that supported gender equality, reasons cited by the sampled households for not supporting gender equality, number of the sampled households as per working members (gender-wise), number of the sampled households whose members had received/were receiving vocational and skill development training (gender-wise), number of the sampled households in which female and male members were receiving same wages for same work, number of the sampled households that included female members in decision-making regarding their education, employment, marriage, apparels, and visits to relatives and friends were studied.*

Keywords: *gender empowerment, Barnoti, Kathua, rural areas, skill, decision-making.*

I. Context

Talking about gender empowerment, Misra (2006) describes that even after efforts have been made to improve the status of women, not much is gained. And the condition of rural women has become worst. Post-feminist methods to engender society have no longer retained their essence. The concerned authorities must redefine gender empowerment by ruling out various types of discriminations on the basis of gender. Women must participate in decision making processes at all the levels. Gupta and Yesudian (2006) enquired about gender empowerment in rural areas of India. They recorded that 43.0 per cent of the rural women stood against domestic atrocities, 23.0 per cent of the rural women had freedom to make visits to their relatives, 43.0 per cent of the rural women had capacity of households, and 40.0 per cent of the rural women lacked attitude based on gender preference. Taking a note on gender empowerment in rural areas of India, Roy and Tisdell (2000) have talked about women with property rights. They attempt to trace the importance of property rights in empowering rural women. They enquire about the justifications for passing on property rights to women and establish division between customary and legal rights. They find that legal rights have been ineffective in the absence of customary rights. Customary rights do not have any effect due to certain institutional factors.

Srivastava and Srivastava (2009) find out that employment has been important in upliftment of the rural resident and rural women in particular. It helps in eradicating poverty. It has tremendous potential for women empowerment and provides opportunities to women to improve their well-being. But women have relatively been paid low wages than their male counterparts. Sanghi, Srija, and Vijay (2015) have studied different factors leading to a fall in females' participation in labour force. They enlist education effect, income effect, and underestimation problem as the factors causing this decline. With the rising level of income, females have been tending to go on paid jobs, but job opportunities have been scanty. Lack of skills also cannot get them desired jobs, and this has led to a sharp decline in females' participation in labour force. Furthermore, Siddiqui, Dutt, Lockie, and Pritchard (2017) have also found that there has been a sharp fall in females' participation in labour force in rural areas of India. They record that this is due to their voluntary withdrawal from workforce. They establish the fact that their domestic work has not been considered. Women should be provided with non-farm work in order to raise their level of participation in labour force. Rani (2014) lays emphasis on the status of rural women. She interprets that a caste-based patriarchal system is the reason behind the low status of women. Patriarchal stereotypes do not allow bringing about a positive change for women. Women need to be provided with work opportunities. Introducing labour markets reforms, may raise the level of women empowerment.

Irrespective of the fact that policy making has been devoted towards political empowerment of females in India; their level of participation in decision-making process has been low. Comparatively, females' participation in decision-making processes in rural areas of India has been much lower. Women need to be empowered so that they participate in making crucial decision affecting their lives in a positive manner (Human Development Report, 1995). Apparently, a small number of females in decision-making bodies have worst effects on gender equality. It certainly leads to a poor status of females. Social environment has been non-

contributing in addressing gender-gaps. Females have never been considered at par with their males counterparts with respect to opportunities for growth in their physical and mental lives. Good governance, supportive to human rights agenda, poses as a requisite for gender equality. But nothing much has been achieved in this particular field (Mahbub ul Haq Research Centre, 2016).

II. Methodology

Two sampled blocks, namely Barnoti and Kathua blocks, in Kathua district were selected by making use of the purposive sampling. Twelve sampled villages namely Janglote, Patyari, Changran, Sherpur, Basantpur, and Mehtabpur in Kathua block, and Barwal, Jandore, Palli, Nihalpur, Sumwan, and Nangal in Barnoti block were also selected by making use of the purposive sampling. Twenty-five sampled households from each sampled village were selected by making use of the simple random sampling (lottery method). A total of three hundred sampled households from the sampled villages in the sampled blocks (one hundred and fifty sampled households from each sampled block) were selected by making use of the simple random sampling (lottery method) and were surveyed by making use of an interview schedule. Data were collected from August, 2016 to July, 2017. After collection of data, these were tabulated and analysed.

III. Gender Empowerment in Barnoti and Kathua blocks in Kathua district

Number of the sampled households that supported gender equality within their families has been reported in table 1. Out of one hundred and fifty sampled households in Barnoti block, 89.3 per cent supported gender equality within their families, 10.0 per cent did not support gender equality within their families, and it was not applicable for 0.6 per cent of the sampled households. Out of one hundred and fifty sampled households in Kathua block, 84.6 per cent supported gender equality within their families, 14.0 per cent did not support gender equality within their families, and it was not applicable for 1.3 per cent of the sampled households. Out of three hundred sampled households in the study area, 87.0 per cent supported gender equality within their families, 12.0 per cent did not support gender equality within their families, and it was not applicable for 1.0 per cent of the sampled households.

Table 1: Number of the Sampled Households that supported Gender Equality within their Families

Block	Supported Gender Equality within their Families			Total Households
	Yes	No	NA*	
Barnoti	134 (89.3)	15 (10.0)	1 (0.6)	150
Kathua	127 (84.6)	21 (14.0)	2 (1.3)	150
Total	261 (87.0)	36 (12.0)	3 (1.0)	300

Notes: * Sampled households not having female members.

Figures in parentheses indicate %.

Figures in parentheses may not add up to 100 due to rounding off.

Source: Field survey.

Reasons cited by the sampled households for not supporting gender equality within their families have been reported in table 2. Out of fifteen sampled households in Barnoti block, 40.0 per cent cited ‘females are weaker than males’ as a reason for not supporting gender equality within their families, 33.3 per cent cited ‘only males should earn’ as a reason for not supporting gender equality within their families, and 26.6 per cent cited ‘females should do domestic chores only’ as a reason for not supporting gender equality within their families. Out of twenty-one sampled households in Kathua block, 28.5 per cent cited ‘females are weaker than males’ as a reason for not supporting gender equality within their families, 33.3 per cent cited ‘only males should earn’ as a reason for not supporting gender equality within their families, and 38.1 per cent cited ‘females should do domestic chores only’ as a reason for not supporting gender equality within their families. Out of thirty-six sampled households in the study area, 33.3 per cent cited ‘females are weaker than males’ as a reason for not supporting gender equality within their families, 33.3 per cent cited ‘only males should earn’ as a reason for not supporting gender equality within their families, and 33.3 per cent cited ‘females should do domestic chores only’ as a reason for not supporting gender equality within their families.

Table 2: Reasons cited by the Sampled Households for not supporting Gender Equality within their Families

Block	Reason			Total Households
	Females are Weaker than Males	Only Males should Earn	Females should do Domestic Chores only	
Barnoti	6	5	4	15

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	(40.0)	(33.3)	(26.6)	
Kathua	6 (28.5)	7 (33.3)	8 (38.1)	21
Total	12 (33.3)	12 (33.3)	12 (33.3)	36

Notes: Figures in parentheses indicate %.

Figures in parentheses may not add up to 100 due to rounding off.

Source: Field survey.

Number of the sampled households as per working members (gender-wise) has been reported in table 3. Out of one hundred and fifty sampled households in Barnoti block, 0.6 per cent had only female working members, 71.3 per cent had only male working members, and 28.0 per cent had both female and male working members. Out of one hundred and fifty sampled households in Kathua block, 68.0 per cent had only male working members and 32.0 per cent had both female and male working members. Out of three hundred sampled households in the study area, 0.3 per cent had only female working members, 69.6 per cent had only male working members, and 30.0 per cent had both female and male working members.

Table 3: Number of the Sampled Households as per Working Members (Gender-Wise)

Block	Working Members			Total Households
	Only Female	Only Male	Both Female and Male	
Barnoti	1 (0.6)	107 (71.3)	42 (28.0)	150
Kathua	--	102 (68.0)	48 (32.0)	150
Total	1 (0.3)	209 (69.6)	90 (30.0)	300

Notes: Figures in parentheses indicate %.

Figures in parentheses may not add up to 100 due to rounding off.

Source: Field survey.

Number of the sampled households whose members had received/were receiving vocational and skill development training (gender-wise) has been reported in table 4. Out of thirty-four sampled households in Barnoti block, 52.9 per cent included female members who had received/were receiving vocational and skill development training, 8.8 per cent included male members who had received/were receiving vocational and skill development training, and 38.2 per cent included both female and male members who had received/were receiving vocational and skill development training. Out of twenty-four sampled households in Kathua block, 41.6 per cent included female members who had received/were receiving vocational and skill development training, 4.1 per cent included male members who had received/were receiving vocational and skill development training, and 54.1 per cent included both female and male members who had received/were receiving vocational and skill development training. Out of fifty-eight sampled households in the study area, 48.2 per cent included female members who had received/were receiving vocational and skill development training, 6.8 per cent included male members who had received/were receiving vocational and skill development training, and 44.8 per cent included both female and male members who had received/were receiving vocational and skill development training.

Table 4: Number of the Sampled Households whose Members had received/were receiving Vocational and Skill Development Training (Gender-Wise)

Block	Received/receiving Vocational and Skill Development Training			Total Households
	Female	Male	Both Female and Male	
Barnoti	18 (52.9)	3 (8.8)	13 (38.2)	34
Kathua	10 (41.6)	1 (4.1)	13 (54.1)	24
Total	28 (48.2)	4 (6.8)	26 (44.8)	58

Notes: Figures in parentheses indicate %.

Figures in parentheses may not add up to 100 due to rounding off.

Source: Field survey.

Number of the sampled households in which female and male members were receiving same wages for same work has been reported in table 5. Out of twenty-three sampled households in Barnoti block, 65.2 per cent included female and male members who were receiving same wages for same work, 17.3 per cent included female and male members who were not receiving same wages for same work, 17.3 per cent included female

and male members who could not say if they were receiving same wages for same work or not. Out of nineteen sampled households in Kathua block, 73.6 per cent included female and male members who were receiving same wages for same work, 21.1 per cent included female and male members who were not receiving same wages for same work, 5.2 per cent included female and male members who could not say if they were receiving same wages for same work or not. Out of forty-two sampled households in the study area, 69.0 per cent included female and male members who were receiving same wages for same work, 19.0 per cent included female and male members who were not receiving same wages for same work, 11.9 per cent included female and male members who could not say if they were receiving same wages for same work or not.

Table 5: Number of the Sampled Households in which Female and Male Members were receiving Same Wages for Same Work

Block	Number			Total Households
	Receiving Same Wages	Not receiving Same Wages	Could not say	
Barnoti	15 (65.2)	4 (17.3)	4 (17.3)	23
Kathua	14 (73.6)	4 (21.1)	1 (5.2)	19
Total	29 (69.0)	8 (19.0)	5 (11.9)	42

Notes: Figures in parentheses indicate %.

Figures in parentheses may not add up to 100 due to rounding off.

Source: Field survey.

Number of the sampled households that included female members in decision-making regarding their education^a has been reported in table 6. Out of one hundred and fifty sampled households in Barnoti block, 41.3 per cent included female members in decision-making regarding their education, 58.0 per cent did not include female members in decision-making regarding their education, and 0.6 per cent did not have female members. Out of one hundred and fifty sampled households in Kathua block, 46.6 per cent included female members in decision-making regarding their education, 52.0 per cent did not include female members in decision-making regarding their education, and 1.3 per cent did not have female members. Out of three hundred sampled households in the study area, 44.0 per cent included female members in decision-making regarding their education, 55.0 per cent did not include female members in decision-making regarding their education, and 1.0 per cent did not have female members.

Table 6: Number of the Sampled Households that included Female Members in Decision-Making regarding their Education

Block	Inclusion			Total Households
	Yes	No	NA*	
Barnoti	62 (41.3)	87 (58.0)	1 (0.6)	150
Kathua	70 (46.6)	78 (52.0)	2 (1.3)	150
Total	132 (44.0)	165 (55.0)	3 (1.0)	300

Notes: * Sampled households not having female members.

Figures in parentheses indicate %.

Figures in parentheses may not add up to 100 due to rounding off.

Source: Field survey.

Number of the sampled households that included female members in decision-making regarding their employment^b has been reported in table 7. Out of one hundred and fifty sampled households in Barnoti block, 30.0 per cent included female members in decision-making regarding their employment, 69.3 per cent did not include female members in decision-making regarding their employment, and 0.6 per cent did not have female members. Out of one hundred and fifty sampled households in Kathua block, 34.0 per cent included female members in decision-making regarding their employment, 64.6 per cent did not include female members in decision-making regarding their employment, and 1.3 per cent did not have female members. Out of three hundred sampled households in the study area, 32.0 per cent included female members in decision-making regarding their employment, 67.0 per cent did not include female members in decision-making regarding their employment, and 1.0 per cent did not have female members.

Table 7: Number of the Sampled Households that included Female Members in Decision-Making regarding their Employment

Block	Inclusion			Total Households
	Yes	No	NA*	
Barnoti	45 (30.0)	104 (69.3)	1 (0.6)	150
Kathua	51 (34.0)	97 (64.6)	2 (1.3)	150
Total	96 (32.0)	201 (67.0)	3 (1.0)	300

Notes: * Sampled households not having female members.

Figures in parentheses indicate %.

Figures in parentheses may not add up to 100 due to rounding off.

Source: Field survey.

Number of the sampled households that included female members in decision-making regarding their marriage^c has been reported in table 8. Out of one hundred and fifty sampled households in Barnoti block, 63.3 per cent included female members in decision-making regarding their marriage, 36.0 per cent did not include female members in decision-making regarding their marriage, and 0.6 per cent did not have female members. Out of one hundred and fifty sampled households in Kathua block, 57.3 per cent included female members in decision-making regarding their marriage, 41.3 per cent did not include female members in decision-making regarding their marriage, and 1.3 per cent did not have female members. Out of three hundred sampled households in the study area, 60.3 per cent included female members in decision-making regarding their marriage, 38.6 per cent did not include female members in decision-making regarding their marriage, and 1.0 per cent did not have female members.

Table 8: Number of the Sampled Households that included Female Members in Decision-Making regarding their Marriage

Block	Inclusion			Total Households
	Yes	No	NA*	
Barnoti	95 (63.3)	54 (36.0)	1 (0.6)	150
Kathua	86 (57.3)	62 (41.3)	2 (1.3)	150
Total	181 (60.3)	116 (38.6)	3 (1.0)	300

Notes: * Sampled households not having female members.

Figures in parentheses indicate %.

Figures in parentheses may not add up to 100 due to rounding off.

Source: Field survey.

Number of the sampled households that included female members in decision-making regarding their apparels^d has been reported in table 9. Out of one hundred and fifty sampled households in Barnoti block, 17.3 per cent included female members in decision-making regarding their apparels, 82.0 per cent did not include female members in decision-making regarding their apparels, and 0.6 per cent did not have female members. Out of one hundred and fifty sampled households in Kathua block, 20.0 per cent included female members in decision-making regarding their apparels, 78.6 per cent did not include female members in decision-making regarding their apparels, and 1.3 per cent did not have female members. Out of three hundred sampled households in the study area, 18.6 per cent included female members in decision-making regarding their apparels, 80.3 per cent did not include female members in decision-making regarding their apparels, and 1.0 per cent did not have female members.

Table 9: Number of the Sampled Households that included Female Members in Decision-Making regarding their Apparels

Block	Inclusion			Total Households
	Yes	No	NA*	
Barnoti	26 (17.3)	123 (82.0)	1 (0.6)	150
Kathua	30 (20.0)	118 (78.6)	2 (1.3)	150
Total	56 (18.6)	241 (80.3)	3 (1.0)	300

Notes: * Sampled households not having female members.

Figures in parentheses indicate %.

Figures in parentheses may not add up to 100 due to rounding off.

Source: Field survey.

Number of the sampled households that included female members in decision-making regarding their visits to relatives and friends has been reported in table 10. Out of one hundred and fifty sampled households in Barnoti block, 56.6 per cent included female members in decision-making regarding their apparels, 42.6 per cent did not include female members in decision-making regarding their apparels, and 0.6 per cent did not have female members. Out of one hundred and fifty sampled households in Kathua block, 58.0 per cent included female members in decision-making regarding their apparels, 40.6 per cent did not include female members in decision-making regarding their apparels, and 1.3 per cent did not have female members. Out of three hundred sampled households in the study area, 57.3 per cent included female members in decision-making regarding their apparels, 41.6 per cent did not include female members in decision-making regarding their apparels, and 1.0 per cent did not have female members.

Table 10: Number of the Sampled Households that included Female Members in Decision-Making regarding their Visits to Relatives and Friends

Block	Inclusion			Total Households
	Yes	No	NA*	
Barnoti	85 (56.6)	64 (42.6)	1 (0.6)	150
Kathua	87 (58.0)	61 (40.6)	2 (1.3)	150
Total	172 (57.3)	125 (41.6)	3 (1.0)	300

Notes: * Sampled households not having female members.

Figures in parentheses indicate %.

Figures in parentheses may not add up to 100 due to rounding off.

Source: Field survey.

IV. Conclusion

This paper analysed data in context with gender empowerment in Barnoti and Kathua blocks in Kathua district. It was discovered that a large number of the sampled households supported gender equality. However, a small number of the sampled households did not support gender equality due to certain reasons such as ‘females are weaker than males’, ‘only males should earn’, et cetera. Most of the sampled households had only male working members followed by some of the sampled households having both female and male working members. There was only a single sampled household with only female working members. It could be concluded that mostly male members in the sampled households were working. About half of the sampled households had female members, a good number of the sampled households had both female and male members, and a small number of the sampled households had male members, respectively, who had received/were receiving vocational and skill development training. Mostly, female members in the sampled households had received/were receiving vocational and skill development training. Out of a small number of the sampled households which had both female and male working members, a high number of the sampled households reported that female and male members were receiving same wages for same work. Talking about inclusion of females in decision-making at the household level, less than half of the sampled households included female members in decision-making regarding their education and about only one-third of the sampled households included female members in decision-making regarding their employment. A good proportion of the sampled households included female members in decision-making regarding their marriage. Most of the sampled households did not include female members in decision-making regarding their apparels and more than half of the sampled households included female members in decision-making regarding their visits to relatives and friends. It was found that female members in the sampled households had limited decision-making power to exercise as per their own will. Though a large number of the sampled households reported that these supported gender equality, but in practice, a very small proportion of the female members in these households were actually allowed to take decisions with respect to various aspects on their own.

V. Notes

- a. To study inclusion of female members in decision-making regarding their education, this paper considered females who had completed their education and females who were attending educational institutions.
- b. To study inclusion of female members in decision-making regarding their employment, this paper considered females who were working and females who desired to work.

- c. To study inclusion of female members in decision-making regarding their marriage, this paper considered both married and unmarried females.
- d. To study inclusion of female members in decision-making regarding their apparels, this paper considered both married and unmarried females.

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